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A WALK AROUND THE

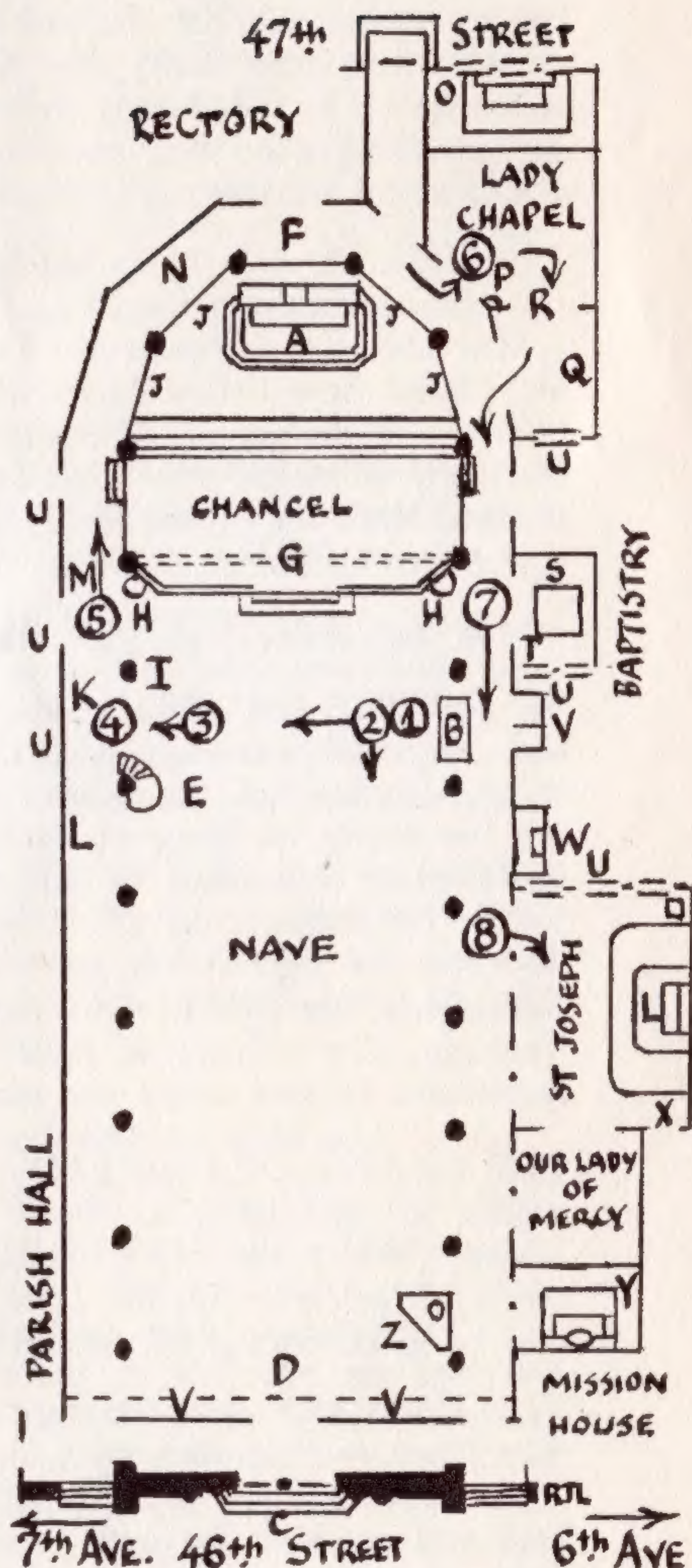
# CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN

NEW YORK

25¢



- A HIGH ALTAR
- B FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL
- C OUTDOOR MADONNA & CALVARY
- D CHOIR & ORGAN
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## A WALK AROUND SAINT MARY'S

### *1. Begin at Founder's Memorial, right-hand front of nave*

THIS PARISH OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH was founded in 1868 by Thomas McKee Brown, a priest then only twenty-seven years old. Choosing a site across Times Square in Forty-fifth Street—where Shubert Alley is now—Father Brown with laymen who joined him in the new venture built a brick church half the size of this one. Since it contained the same altar you see here, you can imagine how imposing it looked, since the altar table is thirteen feet long and the steps behind it are eighteen feet long. Also from the old church are the seven lamps hanging before the altar, symbolizing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and pictured before the heavenly altar in the Revelation of St John the Divine.

FROM THE BEGINNING St Mary's emphasized Catholic worship "made beautiful, majestic, and impressive by all the outward adornments, which are called the Beauty of Holiness." This was the intention of the Founder of St Mary's at a time when the Episcopal Church had little solemnity in its services. Father Brown built his church for High Mass—that is, the Eucharist offered solemnly, with many priests and laymen ministering at the altar, with incense symbolizing our prayer ascending to God, and with music as fine as could be offered. Haydn's 'Imperial Mass' was sung with orchestral accompaniment, for example, when this church was opened in 1895. Three years later Father Brown died. He was buried in Brooklyn—so this is an empty tomb, or cenotaph, reminding us of our young Founder. His sensitive features were carved by J. Massey Rhind, sculptor of the lovely Virgin and Child outside the main doors.

### *2. Face choir gallery and organ in rear*

OUR MUSIC probably makes us best known. It is probably the most inclusive repertory of liturgical music in the United States. Along with masses like Haydn's—which we repeated at our centenary, December 8, 1968, with the Bishop of New York as celebrant—we sing Renaissance, Romantic, and contemporary masses and motets. Plainsong is used for the proper of the Mass, the Psalms at Evensong, and the traditional services of Holy Week. The choir sings from a gallery at the rear of the church, which is best for its own music and to lead the congregation. Acoustics are remarkable: there is a 5½-second reverberation.



THE ORGAN, which you see on the wall above the choir gallery, was built in 1932 by the Aeolian-Skinner Company of Boston to the design of G. Donald Harrison. Harrison is credited with returning American organs from their Romantic emphasis on solo stops to the Classical principle of tonal ensemble. The sound is less muddy and more brilliant in Classical design. This organ, in tone, is essentially French. We are now seeking to complete it with the Bombarde division and other ranks which would make it "the finest French organ outside of France".

SEVERAL "FIRSTS" can be noted in this building: the down-lighting in the ceiling was revolutionary when it was added, but even more daring was the steel structure when the church was built. It has stood up well against blasting for new office buildings nearby. They will surround us eventually, of course. People are always stopping in during the day to rest and pray. Our Sunday congregations, on the other hand, come from many directions and great distances.

### *3. Cross the nave to the foot of the pulpit*

THE MINISTRY OF GOD'S WORD is important to us, and is illustrated on the foot and sides of the pulpit by carvings of great preachers of the Universal Church from Stephen to Francis and Dominic, of the Church of England from Laud to Pusey, and of the American Episcopal Church such as its first Bishop, Seabury. The pulpit was given as a thankoffering for our third Rector, Dr Barry, a notable preacher. Dr Barry's artistic taste is evident around the church, which he beautified. For example, behind the high altar he placed the great painting by Henry Wynd Young of Our Lady enthroned in heaven, and over it filled three windows with glass by C. E. Kempe & Co., the best English stained-glass firm of the time. In the chancel arch he placed the great rood beam—rood means a crucifix, usually with Mary and John standing beside the cross—and also this rood beam has attendant angels. He erected the great shrines of Our Lord and Our Lady flanking the chancel, and in the baptistry you will see the font cover he added. Finally, on the pillars of the nave Dr Barry placed statues of the Twelve Apostles—John the Evangelist, just above you, can be told because he holds a chalice. All these woodcarvings were done by John Kirchmayer, who came to Boston from Oberammergau and was considered to be our country's finest woodcarver. Recently, at the suggestion and partly



in memory of our last Rector, Father Taber, wrought iron grilles have been added flanking the high altar. Interestingly, grilles like these appear in the original architects' drawing by Napoleon Le Brun & Son.

THE VOTIVE CANDLES at the shrines may be lighted by those who kneel there for their prayers. White and red represent Christ in the Eucharistic Host and shedding his Precious Blood. Blue is Our Lady's color, green is associated with St Joseph because he entered everlasting life with Jesus beside him, and the unbleached wax is used for the departed.

#### *4. Go into the side aisle*

THE WAY OF THE CROSS begins here. At the First Station we see Pilate condemning Jesus, and the subsequent scenes show him going to death and burial. In this devotion made up of Bible-reading and prayer—public in Lent and often done privately, too—we follow Christ to learn to suffer and triumph with him.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD, a porcelain bas-relief on the wall just down the aisle, was undoubtedly made in the famous della Robbia workshop at Florence. You will see another example across the church over St Joseph's altar.

#### *5. Walk through the ambulatory behind the high altar*

CHRIST'S FACE, SUFFERING, was carved at Oberammergau by Anton Lang, who played the part of Christ in the Passion Play. The carving, given by a parishioner, was put here by Father Taber. The statue of St Vincent, Spanish deacon and martyr, is here as patron of the acolytes. Behind the high altar, the great painting of Our Lady in her glory has at the bottom five scenes: the Joyful Mysteries of the Annunciation to Mary by Gabriel, the Visitation of Mary to Elisabeth, the Nativity of Christ, and his Presentation and his Finding in the Temple.

#### *6. Beyond the high altar, enter the Lady Chapel*

THE LADY CHAPEL is dedicated in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom we call Our Lady. The Lady Chapel is used twice every weekday: for Morning and Evening Prayer and the Mass following each of these services. The altar—truly a table—in that respect anticipated the return, nowadays, to earlier forms. In



Kempe's windows over the altar you may make out his mark, a golden wheat-sheaf, in the lower left corner of the left-hand lancet. The chapel was entirely given by one of the Trustees of St Mary's, Haley Fiske, who commissioned another Trustee, Elliott Daingerfield, to paint the murals. Such large and striking compositions were sensational in 1904. The paintings on the side walls (left and right, respectively) represent the Annunciation and the Epiphany. Daingerfield's daughter is the little blonde girl peeking out of the front left corner, and Fiske's children posed for the cherubs over the rear arch.

**THE LADY CHAPEL CEILING**, given by Ambassador John Gilbert Winant and his wife, was designed by Ralph Adams Cram after Late Medieval English models, and is one of the finest features of the church. Notice the angels proclaiming "AVE".

**THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM** was placed at the back of the Lady Chapel in 1969. The statue was carved near the original shrine in England, in the tiny Norfolk village of Walsingham which, once again, has become a great place of pilgrimage. It is not too usual to see Christ portrayed as a young boy.

**LEAVING THE LADY CHAPEL**, look up at the brilliant window way in back depicting the Coronation of the Virgin, then from there look at the 16th century carvings on the wall to the left of scenes from Our Lord's life, and at the rood in the arch which was brought from the old Forty-fifth Street church.

### *7. Go down the aisle to the baptistry and beyond*

**THE FONT** was brought from the old church. The first child baptized in it here, when the church was opened on December 8, 1895, lent us her christening robe for our centennial exhibition. The font cover, carved by Kirchmayer with seventy-three tiny figures, is a masterpiece. In the aumbry, or wall-safe, are kept the Holy Oils for anointing those to be baptized, those to be confirmed, and the sick. The baptistry murals and glass are by a Philadelphia artist, Valentine d'Ogries, who also made the triangular windows in the side aisle directly across the church, those you are about to see in St Joseph's chapel, and the Coronation window you have already seen in the back of the Lady Chapel.

**THE CONFESSIONAL** is used for the ministry of reconciliation,



the penitent kneeling on one side and the priest sitting on the other. Privacy is assured, but the priest can hear the confession and the penitent can hear him give counsel and absolution. Time for confession is provided every day because so many come from outside the parish to make their confessions at St Mary's. In the Anglican Communion, sacramental confession is a voluntary privilege.

THE SHRINE OF THE SACRED HEART shows Jesus Christ's loving-kindness symbolized by his human heart. Notice that he holds a Host for Holy Communion. The bread and wine for Communion are placed here before High Mass, to be carried to the altar as offerings of the people. This statue, and one you are about to see of Our Lady of Mercy, were carved by Lee Lawrie, perhaps best known in New York for his statue of Atlas at Rockefeller Center opposite St Patrick's Cathedral.

*8. Pass through the side chapels to the back of the church*

ST JOSEPH'S CHAPEL is used for noonday Mass during the week and for small weddings—as you could guess from the altar-piece of the marriage of Joseph and Mary. The glass, which illustrates the Benedictus, or Song of Zacharias at the birth of his son John the Baptist, is unusual in this country—it is in the style of the Italian Renaissance. So are the plasterwork around the altar, the door to the right of it, and the ceiling of the chapel. More particularly, the style is Florentine, while that of the next chapel is Venetian. The ceilings of these chapels and the Lady Chapel are remarkable to find under one roof, and repay careful study.

THE CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF MERCY is used as a place of repose for the dead, for small funerals, and for other Requiem Masses. Notice the black marble altar and floor, and the 15th century woodcarving of the death of St Anthony. Ashes of the dead may be given permanent safe-keeping at St Mary's.

THE CALVARY near the door of the church serves many people who come in from the street to offer prayer on their way to and from work. It is our most popular shrine. From here you can look back and see how the great rood dominates the church, and how from everywhere in the nave your eye will be drawn to the altar and its tabernacle, in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved for Communion of the sick and of others who could not come to Mass.



OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, all who pass by can see Christ lifted up on his cross. The carved stone Calvary above the main entrance is another "first"—the first to be erected out-of-doors on a public building in New York City.

THIS CHURCH was built to help us "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Before you leave it, thank God for his Church and please pray for all who find him here and try to serve him.

OUR SERVICES depend on your generous giving. Please help us keep our doors wide open. If you have questions about our faith and practice, the clergy will be glad to meet and talk with you. You are always welcome to worship with us.

## SERVICES

### SUNDAYS

Morning Prayer .....	7:10 a.m.
Mass .....	7:30, 9:00 (Sung), and 10:00 a.m.
High Mass (with sermon) .....	11:00 a.m.
Mass .....	5:00 p.m.
Evensong and Benediction .....	6:00 p.m.

*In summer, services at 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.  
are said instead of sung.*

### WEEKDAYS

Morning Prayer .....	7:10 a.m.
Mass daily .....	7:30 a.m. and 12:10 and 6:15 p.m.
Evening Prayer .....	6:00 p.m.

*Other services during the week and on festivals  
as announced on the preceding Sunday.*

## CONFESSIONS

DAILY, 12:40-1 p.m., also

FRIDAYS, 5-6 p.m.

SATURDAYS, 2-3 and 5-6 p.m.

SUNDAYS, 8:40-9 a.m.

## CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN

139 West 46th Street, New York

(East of Times Square, between 6th and 7th Avenues)

*Church open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.*